THE

CHARACTER

OF

KATHARINE,

LATE

Ducheſs of *Buckinghamſhire* and *Normanby.*

By the late Mr. *POPE.*

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LATE

Ducheſs of *Buckinghamſhire,* &c. &c.

SHE was the Daughter of *James* the Second, and of the Counteſs of *Dorcheſter*, who inherited the Integrity and Virtue of her Father with happier Fortune. She was married firſt to *James* Earl of *Angleſey*, and ſecondly to *John Sheffield* Duke of *Buckinghamſhire* and *Normanby*; with the former She exerciſed the Virtues of *Patience and Suffering*,

as long as there was any Hopes of doing Good by either; with the latter all other *Conjugal Virtues*. The Man of fineſt Senſe and ſharpeſt Diſcernment, She had the Happineſs to pleaſe; and in that, found her only Pleaſure. When he died, it ſeem'd as if his Spirit was only breathed into her, to fulfill what he had begun, to perform what he had concerted, and to preſerve and watch over what he had left, *his only Son*; in the Care of whoſe Health, the forming of whoſe Mind, and the Improvement of whoſe Fortune, She acted with the Conduct and Senſe of the *Father*, ſoften'd, but not overcome with the Tenderneſs of the *Mother*. Her Underſtanding was ſuch as muſt have made a Figure, had it been in a Man; but the Modeſty of her Sex threw a Veil over its Luſtre, which nevertheleſs ſuppreſs'd only the Expreſſion, not the Exertion of it; for her Senſe was not ſuperior to her Reſolution, which, when once She was in the Right, preſerv'd her from making it only a Tranſition to the Wrong, the frequent Weakneſs even of the beſt Women. She often followed wiſe Counſel, but ſometimes went before it, always with Succeſs. She was poſſeſs'd of a Spirit, which aſſiſted her to get the better of thoſe Accidents which admitted of any Redreſs, and enabled her to ſupport outwardly with Decency

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and Dignity thoſe which admitted of none; yet melted inwardly through almoſt her whole Life, at a Succeſſion of melancholy and affecting Objects, the Loſs of all her Children, the Misfortunes of *Relations and Friends, publick and private,* and the Death of thoſe who were deareſt to her. Her Heart was as compaſſionate as it was great: Her Affections warm even to Sollicitude: Her Friendſhip not violent or jealous, but rational and perſevering: Her Gratitude equal and conſtant to the Living; to the Dead boundleſs and heroical. What Perſon ſoever She found worthy of her Eſteem, She wou'd not give up for any Power on Earth; and the greateſt on Earth whom She cou'd not Eſteem, obtain'd from her no farther Tribute than Decency. Her Good-Will was wholly directed by Merit, not by Accident; not meaſured by the Regard they profeſs'd for her own Deſert, but by her Idea of theirs: And as there was no Merit which She was not able to imitate, there was none which She cou'd envy; therefore her Converſation was as free from Detraction, as her Opinions from Prejudice or Prepoſſeſſion. As her Thoughts were her own, ſo were her Words; and She was as ſincere in uttering her Judgment, as impartial in forming it. She was a ſafe Companion, many were ſerv'd,

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none ever ſuffer'd by her Acquaintance: Inoffenſive, when unprovok'd; when provok'd, not ſtupid: But the Moment her Enemy ceaſed to be hurtful, She could ceaſe to act as an Enemy. She was therefore not a bitter but conſiſtent Enemy: (tho' indeed, when forced to be ſo, the more a finiſh'd One for having been long a making.) And her Proceeding with ill People was more in a calm and ſteady Courſe, like Juſtice, than in quick and paſſionate Onſets, like Revenge. As for thoſe of whom She only thought ill, She conſidered them not ſo much as once to wiſh them ill; of ſuch, her Contempt was great enough to put a Stop to all other Paſſions that could hurt them. Her Love and Averſion, her Gratitude and Reſentment, her Eſteem and Neglect were equally open and ſtrong, and alterable only from the Alteration of the Perſons who created them. Her Mind was too noble to be inſincere, and her Heart too honeſt to ſtand in Need of it; ſo that She never found Cauſe to repent her Conduct either to a Friend or an Enemy. There remains only to ſpeak of her Perſon, which was moſt amiably Majeſtick, the niceſt Eye could find no Fault in the Outward Lineaments of her Face or Proportion of her Body; it was ſuch, as pleas'd wherever ſhe had a Deſire it ſhou'd; yet ſhe never envy'd that of any other,

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which might better pleaſe in general: In the ſame Manner, as being content that her Merits were eſteemed where She deſired they ſhould, She never depreciated thoſe of any other that were eſteemed or prefered elſewhere. For She aimed not at a general Love or a general Eſteem where She was not known; it was enough to be poſſeſs'd of both wherever ſhe was. Having lived to the Age of Sixty-two Years; not courting Regard, but receiving it from all who knew her; not loving Buſineſs, but diſcharging it fully whereſoever Duty or Friendſhip engaged her in it; not following Greatneſs, but not declining to pay Reſpect, as far as was due from Independency and Diſintereſt; having honourably abſolv'd all the Parts of Life; She forſook this World, where She had left no Act of Duty or Virtue undone, for that where alone ſuch Acts are rewarded, on the 13th Day of *March* 1742-3. *

* The above Character was written by Mr. *Pope* ſome Years before Her Grace's Death.